



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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CONTACT: Jeff Neal  
202/224-6167

## **CHAFEE HAILS RELEASE OF NATIONAL ESTUARY STRATEGY**

***Says Plan Increases Momentum for Federal Estuary Restoration Funding***

WASHINGTON, DC – Senator Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) today hailed the Bush Administration's unveiling of a national estuary restoration strategy aimed at restoring one million acres of habitat over ten years.

Formulation of the national strategy, which was published today in the *Federal Register*, was required as part of legislation – the Estuary Habitat Restoration Act – authored by the late Senator John Chafee, championed by Lincoln Chafee, and enacted in November, 2000. Creation of the strategy sets the stage for Congress to fully fund the Estuary Habitat Restoration Partnership Program.

"America's estuaries serve critical biological and economic purposes," Chafee said. "Estuaries – the unique biological habitats created by the confluence of fresh and salt water along our coastline – serve as the basis of the food chain upon which all life depends. Estuaries also provide tremendous economic activity for industries such as fishing and tourism. In Rhode Island, for instance, thousands of families and businesses depend on the health of Narragansett Bay's estuary resources."

Chafee continued. "I'm pleased that the Administration has put this plan forward. Under the Estuary Restoration Act, this national strategy is the first step in our efforts to preserve, protect, and restore America's estuaries. Now that a plan is out, I'm very hopeful that Congress will provide the \$10 million that's needed to begin this important work."

"I also want to salute the terrific work done by groups such as Save the Bay in Rhode Island. Save the Bay is at the forefront of efforts to protect our fragile estuarine systems," Chafee concluded.

Save the Bay Executive Director Curt Spalding also signaled the importance of the national estuary restoration strategy. "This is a very important first step toward implementation of the Estuaries and Clean Water Act, enacted in November 2000. This law, championed by the late Senator John Chafee and carried forward by Senator Lincoln Chafee, created a national estuary restoration program. We now need federal funding to make the strategy bear the fruit of on the ground restoration in Narragansett Bay and elsewhere. We urge President Bush and Congress to fund this vital work.

"Save The Bay is tremendously appreciative of Senator Lincoln Chafee's leading the charge to secure the necessary dollars to move restoration forward in Rhode Island," Spalding concluded.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Estuary Habitat Restoration Strategy can be located on page 22415 of today's *Federal Register*, which is available on the Internet through the Government Printing Office website at <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

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